



IDS 121.47 Text and Context: Art and the Artist (Literature and Film)

Section 1; TR 2-3:15 p.m.;STV 350A; Instructor: Dr. Elizabeth Hatmaker; STV 314Q; 8-2364;
eahatma@ilstu.edu; **Office Hours: TR 3:30-5**

Required Texts for Class: Arbus, Diane. Selected photographs (available through Blackboard); Bellamy, Dodie. "Phone Home." (available via the English Dept. digital reading reserves); Casper, Vera. *Laura*; Gresham, William Lindsay. *Nightmare Alley*; McClain, William. "Western, Go Home! Sergio Leone and the 'Death of the Western' in American Film Criticism" (available through Project Muse on Milner Database); Murch, Walter. *In the Blink of an Eye: Revised 2nd Edition*; Satrapi, Marjane. *The Complete Persepolis*.

Films: *Laura* (Preminger, 1944); *The Conversation* (Coppola 1974); *Freaks* (Browning 1932); *Per Qualche Dollaro in Più* a.k.a. *For A Few Dollars More* (Leone 1967); *Persepolis* (2007); Film shorts and clips TBA.

Introduction: In this class we'll study film as a nexus of artistic praxis. That is, we'll not only study film AS art but also various art forms that influence art (photography, graphic art, novels, performance art) and are influenced by film. As we think about the status of film as art, we'll consider a number of issues:

1. *Editing/Production Values:* What are the central building blocks of films? What techniques in editing, lighting, cinematography, staging, sound production, etc. make a film "artistic" and meaningful? How do films make us think and feel differently than other modes of storytelling and exhibition?
2. *Collaborative Production:* how do we think about the collective role of various participants (directors, actors, technicians, producers) in the artistic production? How do the roles of various participants change over time? How do the authors of source materials (novels or plays, for instance) work with filmmakers?
3. *Historical Context:* What are the material and economic conditions in which films are created? How does historical context influence how (or if) we think of specific films (and the larger practice of filmmaking) as art?
4. *Film in Collaboration w/Related Art Forms:* How do related art forms influence the production and appreciation of film? Given the rise of popular new media forms and venues like video games and YouTube, how do we conceive of the future influence of filmmaking?

5. *Film Reception*: How do both the content of specific films and the experience of watching films in a variety of contexts influence artists and other active viewers?

Class Format and Content: Lecture, In-Class Viewing, Discussion, In-Class Projects/Writing. While I have tried to pick films that are not graphic or overly-disturbing, but some of the novels/films we study contain representations of violence and sex. One film offers what some will find unflattering representations of persons with disabilities. Some of the historical films affirm attitudes that contemporary viewers might find sexist, racist, and otherwise troubling. I think it is important to consider not only what is beautiful, but also what we are afraid to see or “shouldn’t” see. I offer these films/novels because I think they represent conflicts that rest at the heart of our cultural ambivalence about film culture and popular culture more broadly. Know that I try to present all class material with sensitivity and respect to diverse experiences and belief systems. However, if you are concerned about class content, please come and talk to me. Hopefully you’ll also find some of the films and writing that you find beautiful, touching, and positive.

Major Assignments/Grades

Film/Reading Responses (4)-- 30 points each

Reading Responses are Designed to help you formulate ideas about the films we watch and the concepts we talk about in class. They are typically 2-3 pages (one might serve well as a rough draft of your final paper)

Vocabulary (4)—15 points each

For each unit I want you to hand in a list of 10 terms and their definitions from class discussion, the readings, the films, or from the Bordwell and Thompson film term glossary located on the English Dept. digital reserves. Add a sentence or two about why you found this term/concept interesting or, if you are referencing film language, where you saw the technique/film style used in something we’ve watched or read.

Viewing/Reading Quizzes: (5 short answer questions) 10 points each

These unannounced quizzes are to make sure that you are paying attention to films and keeping up with readings. Generally if there is good class discussion, there will be fewer of these. If people stare blankly at me when I talk about films and readings, then count on them.

Midterm Exam-- 100 points

Short Answer, T/F, Multiple Choice, Matching, and short (1 page) Take Home Section on a film clip

Final Exam-- 100 points

Short Answer, T/F, Multiple Choice, Matching, and short (1 page) Take Home Section on a film clip

Final Paper--100 points

8-10 page, more information TBA

Class Policies

Attendance: I take attendance every class period, even those during which we watch films. As we don’t have a lab time scheduled for screening films, we do spend significant time watching films. You are expected to attend these

classes. If you miss more than 5 classes, your grade will drop by one letter grade. If you miss more than 8 classes (equal to one month), I will encourage you to withdraw as you cannot pass the class. If you have a special situation (major illness, death in the immediate family), please let me know. I'll try to work with you, but know that I cannot guarantee a good or passing grade in all special situations.

On Viewing Films in Class: Since we do watch films in class, we need to maintain a quiet, respectful environment in class. If your behavior is a continued distraction to other students (you are talking/whispering; eating loudly or smacking gum; coughing, sneezing, or blowing your nose repeatedly), I will encourage you to leave. Please turn your cell phone ringer off and refrain from texting during films. If you have a cold, please take antihistamines and/or cough syrup before class.

One thing we will work on in class is how to take notes to facilitate deeper understanding of the films we watch. I understand that many find this difficult and we will spend time in class discussing strategies. While I don't expect you to note every detail of the films we watch, I do expect that you will have a basic knowledge of the film plot, character names, year the film was released, names of director and major actors.

The films we view are available easily through Milner Library, Normal Public Library, Netflix and/or The Movie Fan. Many of the clips we watch are easily accessible on Youtube (I'll document which ones we watch). If you have to miss class because of sickness or because you've been asked to leave, I recommend that you rent the films you miss. You will still be responsible for (and may be quizzed on) basic knowledge of the film.

Late Work: Individual quizzes can't make up if you miss class. If you need extra time on writing projects, please contact me. I'm happy to help you if you are having trouble or even if you just need a little more time to hand in a paper that will represent your best work. However, you do need to contact me either by e-mail or in person to set up an alternative turn-in date; open-ended extensions are not an option.

Blackboard: I do have a Blackboard account set up for you to hand in assignments. If you are not a fan of Blackboard, I will accept hard copies of your assignments (other than quizzes). I would prefer that you only send papers to me via e-mail as a last resort.

Drafts/Conferences/Grade Negotiation: I am happy to look at a reasonable number of drafts before you hand in papers. I'm also happy to meet during my office hours or during an agreed-upon time to discuss any missed material, concerns, or grades. While I am happy to discuss grade changes and to work with you so that you can do well in the class, I don't play the "how can I get an A?" game. Also, I don't discuss grades during the last week of class and/or finals week.

Plagiarism and Writing Concerns: 121.47 is a writing intensive class. This means that some of your grade will be based on your ability to write a coherent response to the films and the ideas we discuss in class. We'll explore how to effectively integrate descriptions of films into your papers, as well as utilize reviews and articles effectively. Although I don't mind if you access sources like allmovie.com, imdb.com, or Wikipedia (they are often good for finding out dates, names, etc.), they do not constitute appropriate sources for papers in this class.

In all cases of plagiarism, faculty members are required to refer the student to Community Rights and Responsibilities for the violation of Illinois State University's Code of Student Conduct. Clearly handing in a paper you did not write constitutes plagiarism and will result in serious consequences; smaller problems with citation and attribution within a clearly original text are serious, but may be handled between the student and instructor. If I discover that you have simply copied a paper or response from an online source or another person's work, you will receive a grade of F for the assignment with no opportunity to revise or make-up the grade. If you get caught doing this more than once, you will fail the class. If you need more time on writing assignments, ask for it. If you have writing concerns know that I'm happy to work with you. I don't expect perfect writing, but I do expect that you hand in your own writing.

“Double-dipping” is when you hand in work completed in or for another course without any revisions or acknowledgement. This constitutes a form of academic dishonesty to both your instructor and your classmates. Certainly you should feel empowered to combine ideas from other courses or revisit paper ideas you addressed in previous courses (or are addressing in current courses) as long as you are willing to work them into a paper that fulfills the requirements and course goals of this class. I won’t be offended if you tell me you’d like to continue a project you started in another class—just come talk to me about what you are doing.

How To Reach Me: The best way to reach me is by e-mail or in person. I do have an office phone, but I cannot make calls easily to phones outside of the 309 area code (i.e. most cell phones). While I try to respond quickly to any question, I don’t typically respond to “what did I miss?” e-mails. Please refer to the syllabus, ask a classmate, or talk to me when you return to class.

Persons with Disabilities: To request academic accommodations due to a disability, please contact The Office of Disability Concerns at 309-438-5853 (voice) or 309-438-8620 (TTY/TDD). If you are going to need special accommodations to succeed in class, you must arrange that through the ODC and provide me with the documentation the ODC provides.

Safe Zone: You’ll see a pink triangle on my office door that signifies that I am part of ISU’s Safe Zone program. This program is designed to provide a highly visible “safe” space (my office) and support system (me) for gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender students at ISU.

Unit 1: Early Cinema to Classic Hollywood: Spectacle, Narrative and The Cinema of Attractions

Week 1 (Jan. 11-13)

T: Introduction

R: Gresham thru 45

Week 2 (Jan. 18-20)

T: Gresham thru 164

R: Gresham thru end

Week 3 (Jan. 25-27)

T: Film-- *Freaks*

R: Film-- *Freaks*

Week 4 (Feb 1)

T: Arbus Photos (via Blackboard); **Reading Response 1 Due**

Unit 2: The Dark Romance: Film Noir, Gender, and Post-War Life

Week 4 continued (Feb. 3)

R: Casperly thru 88

Week 5 (Feb. 8-10)

T: Casperly thru 176

R: Casperly thru end (and afterward)

Week 6 (Feb. 15-17)

T: Film-- *Laura*

R: Film-- *Laura*

Week 7 (Feb. 22-24)

T: Review for Midterm Exam (Hand out Take Home Section); **Reading Response 2 Due**

R: **Midterm Exam**

Unit 3: Westerns—Genre, National Identity, and the Death of Hollywood?

Week 8 (Mar 2-4)

T: Film-- *Per Qualche Dollaro in Più*

R: Film-- *Per Qualche Dollaro in Più*

Week 9 (Mar. 8-11)

Spring Break

Week 10 (Mar 16-18)

T:

R: McClain article, **Response 3 Due**

The New Hollywood Editor, Trans-National Cinema, and the Cult of Reception

Week 11 (Mar 23-25)

T: Murch thru 72

R: Murch thru end;

Week 12 (Mar 30-Apr. 1)

T: Film: *The Conversation*

R: Film: *The Conversation*

Week 13: (Apr 6-8)

T: Satrapi thru 153

R: Satrapi thru end

Week 14: (April 13-15)

T: Film: *Persepolis*

R: Film: *Persepolis*

Week 15 (April 20-22)

T: Bellamy Essay

R: **Response 4 Due**

Week 16(Apr 27-29)

T: Review for Final Exam (Hand out Take Home Section); Writing Workshop (help with citations, etc.)

R: **Final Exam**

Final Paper is due during your scheduled Final Exam period TBA. You can hand in your final paper via Blackboard or in person to my office (STV 413Q).

